

Preface

A little over 60 years ago, the Social Security Act was signed into law. This historically significant legislation changed how we as a Nation take care of our people. For the first time, there was direct Federal involvement in the welfare of individuals, particularly for alleviating poverty among the aged. Although the original law has been amended many times, it remains the cornerstone of our vast network of social programs.

The primary purpose of this publication is to give you a comprehensive picture of the programs under the Social Security Act and how they operate for the benefit of society as a whole and its individual members—be they workers, parents, children, persons with disabilities, or those who are poor. A picture of our Nation today is very different from the one taken in 1935. This publication provides an informative frame of reference for viewing our Social Security programs—a brief look back and a look at the present.

This edition was prepared by many individuals in the Office of Research, Evaluation and Statistics and other SSA offices. To those individuals, thank you for your work. An expression of appreciation is also extended to those in other agencies who reviewed and checked the accuracy of the materials related to their programs. For questions or comments you have concerning the contents of this publications please e:mail celine.d.houget@ssa.gov or telephone 202-282-7156.

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July 1997
